

Buncombe County Schools are Compassionate! So... What is a Compassionate School?

A school where staff and students learn to be aware of the challenges faced by others. They respond to the physical, social, academic, and emotional challenges faced by students and families by offering support and guidance to remove barriers to learning – **without judgement**.



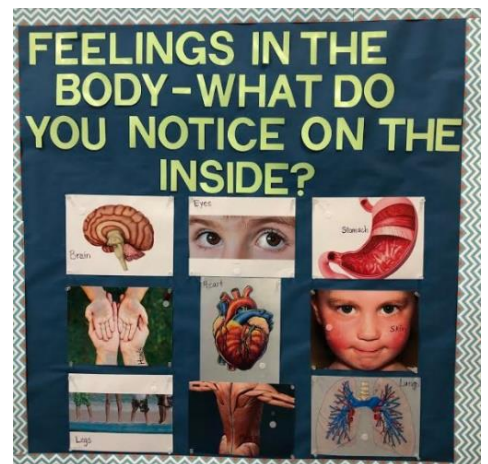
Compassionate Schools benefit all students, but focus on students chronically exposed to stress and trauma in their lives. Staff have been trained in the neurological impact of chronic stress/trauma and its impact on the brain.

As part of the Compassionate Schools Model some of our staff have been trained in Mindful Schools. *Mindful Schools is about noticing what is happening right now. It is noticing how your body feels and what you see, hear, smell and taste. It is also noticing what your mind is doing.* Some schools have implemented this with teacher groups focusing on wellness skills, while other School Counselors integrate 15 minute lessons from the Mindful Schools Program into their social emotional curriculum.

Counselors and other trained staff have also integrated CRM (Community Resiliency Model) into their social emotional curriculum. CRM is a set of 6 wellness skills that builds resiliency in youth and adults when they encounter stress. This helps understand the biological basis of chronic stress/trauma and the impact on the nervous system.

Research in school-based contexts reveals benefits such as:

- Better focus and concentration
- Increased sense of calm
- Decreased stress and anxiety
- Improved self-awareness
- Skillful responses to difficult emotions
- Increased empathy and understanding of others
- Development of natural conflict resolution skills



What might you see in the classroom?

- Calm spots
- Calming strategies
- Growth mindset lessons/strategies
- Dan Siegel brain model
- Second Step lessons
- Morning meetings
- Brain gym, brain breaks, and energizers

Helpful Websites: